

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A variable length coding method comprising:
comparing corresponding portions of a present picture and a previous picture received by a video encoder;
writing a COD (coded macroblock indication) flag indicating a picture type of the present picture on the basis of a mode control signal received from a coding controller, when the present picture is determined to be an inter picture type;
determining if the COD flag is equal to a first value indicating lack of motion information in the present picture;
and
performing coding by fixing a setting the COD (coded macroblock indication) flag of the present picture at a certain to a second value, in response to said corresponding portions being similar to each other if the COD flag is equal to the first value, wherein the second value is not equal to the first value so that a decoder can detect an error by checking the value of COD flag.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said corresponding portions comprise at least one macroblock each, if the COD flag is equal to the first value.
3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~certain~~ second value is approximately equal to "0".
4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
setting a MCBPC (macroblock type & coded block pattern for chrominance) flag equal to a ~~first~~ third value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value.
5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the ~~first~~ third value is approximately equal to "1".
6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
setting a CBPY (coded block pattern for luminance) flag equal to a ~~second~~ fourth value if the COD flag is equal to the first value.

7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 6, wherein the ~~second~~fourth value is approximately equal to "11".

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
setting a MVD (motion vector data) flag equal to a ~~third~~fifth value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8, wherein the ~~third~~fifth value is approximately equal to "0".

10. (Currently amended) A variable length coding method comprising:
determining a coding mode of a macroblock;
writing a COD (coded macroblock indication) flag indicating a picture type of the macroblock on the basis of a mode control signal received from a coding controller, when the macroblock is determined to be an inter picture;
determining if the COD flag is equal to a first value indicating lack of motion information in the macroblock;
setting-changing a the COD (~~coded macroblock indication~~) flag of a the macroblock header to a second value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value, wherein the second value is not equal to the first value so that a decoder can detect an error by checking the value of COD flag if the COD flag is equal to the first value;
a first value, when a coding mode of the macroblock is determined to be in an Inter mode;
setting a MCBPC (macroblock type & coded block pattern for chrominance) flag to a ~~second~~third value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value;
setting a CBPY (coded block pattern for luminance) flag to a ~~third~~fourth value, if the COD is equal to the first value; and
setting a MVD (motion vector data) flag a ~~fourth~~fifth value, if the COD is equal to the first value.

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the ~~first~~second value is approximately "0".

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the ~~second~~third value is approximately "1".

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the ~~third~~fourth value is approximately "11".

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the ~~fourth~~fifth value is approximately "0".

15. (Currently amended) A variable length coding system comprising:

means for determining a coding mode of a macroblock;

means for setting a COD (coded macroblock indication) flag of a macroblock header to a first value, when a coding mode of the macroblock is determined to be ~~in an Inter mode~~ and the macroblock lacks motion information;

means for determining if the COD flag is equal to a first value indicating lack of motion information in the macroblock;

means for changing the COD flag of the macroblock to a second value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value, wherein the second value is not equal to the first value so that a decoder can detect an error by checking the value of COD flag if the COD flag is equal to the first value;

means for setting a MCBPC (macroblock type & coded block pattern for chrominance) flag to a third value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value;

means for setting a CBPY (coded block pattern for luminance) flag to a fourth value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value; and

means for setting a MVD (motion vector data) flag to a fifth value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value.

~~means for setting a MCBPC (macroblock type & coded block pattern for chrominance) flag to a second value;~~

~~means for setting a CBPY (coded block pattern for luminance) flag to a third value; and~~

~~means for setting a MVD (motion vector data) flag a fourth value.~~

16. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11, wherein the ~~first~~second value is approximately "0".

17. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11, wherein the ~~second~~third value is approximately "1".

18. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11, wherein the ~~third~~fourth value is approximately "11".

19. (Currently amended) The system of claim 11, wherein the ~~fourth~~fifth value is approximately "0".

20. (Currently amended) A method for variable length coding in a video codec, the method comprising:

determining whether a macroblock is coded in a first mode;

writing a COD (coded macroblock indication) flag, if the macroblock is not coded in the first mode;

determining if the COD flag is equal to a first value;

changing the COD flag to a second value different from the first value so that a decoder can detect an error by checking the value of COD flag if the COD flag is equal to the first value,
writing an MCBPC (macroblock type & coded block pattern for chrominance) flag to a third value, writing a CBPY (coded block pattern for luminance) flag to a fourth value, and writing a MVD (motion vector data) flag to a fifth value, in response to the COD flag being equal to the first value;

_____ else, writing an MCBPC flag and CBPY flag; determining whether a differential value of a QP is equal to a sixth value; and writing a DQUANT flag, in response to the differential value of the QP being unequal to the a sixth value; and writing a motion vector data (MVD) flag, if the macroblock is not coded in the first mode.

21. (New) A variable length coding apparatus of a mobile communication terminal comprising:

a device for comparing corresponding portions of a present picture and a previous picture

received by a video encoder;

a device for writing a COD (coded macroblock indication) flag indicating a picture type of the present picture on the basis of a mode control signal received from a coding controller, when the present picture is determined to be an inter picture type;

a device for determining if the COD flag is equal to a first value indicating lack of motion information in the present picture; and

a device for setting the COD flag of the present picture to a second value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value, wherein the second value is not equal to the first value so that a decoder can detect an error by checking the value of COD flag.

22. (New) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein said corresponding portions comprise at least one macroblock each, if the COD flag is equal to the first value.

23. (New) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the second value is approximately equal to "0".

24. (New) The apparatus of claim 21, further comprising:

a device for setting a MCBPC (macroblock type & coded block pattern for chrominance) flag equal to a third value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value.

25. (New) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the third value is approximately equal to "1".

26. (New) The apparatus of claim 21, further comprising:

a device for setting a CBPY (coded block pattern for luminance) flag equal to a fourth value if the COD flag is equal to the first value.

27. (New) The apparatus of claim 26, wherein the fourth value is approximately equal to "11".

28. (New) The apparatus of claim 21, further comprising:

a device for setting a MVD (motion vector data) flag equal to a fifth value, if the COD flag is equal to the first value.

29. (New) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein the fifth value is approximately equal to "0".